

# An Approach to Improve Community Understanding (and Thereby Trust?) at the Exide Facility Situation in East Los Angeles

## *The Role of an Independent Technical Resource*

### *El Papel de un Recurso Técnico Independiente*

Based on ideas implemented by Project Navigator, Ltd.  
for Community stakeholder engagement at PG&E's  
chromium-6 groundwater remediation program at  
Hinkley, CA (aka the "Erin Brockovich case")

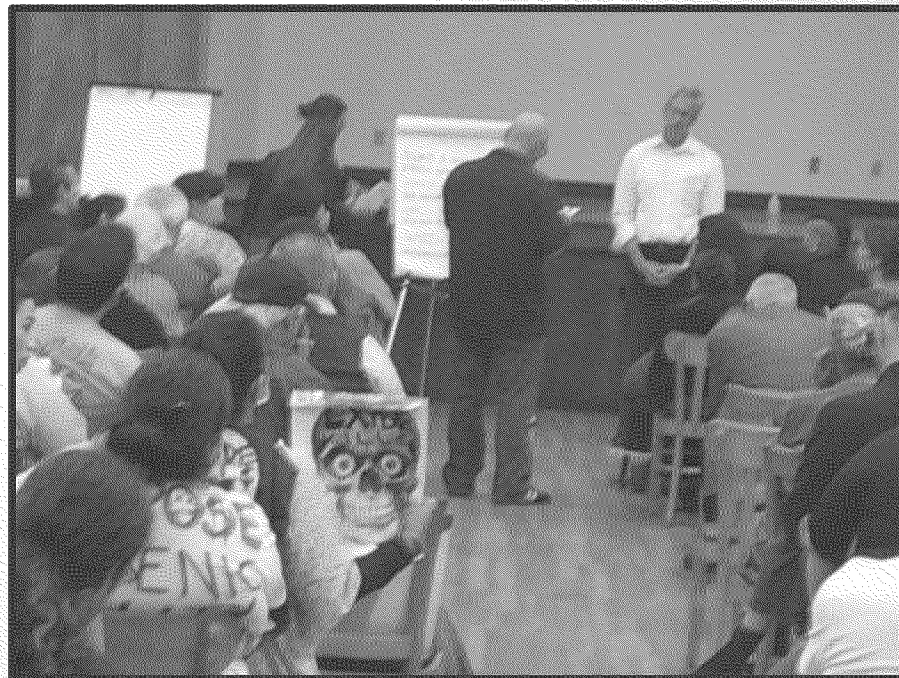
**May 6, 2014**

*Prepared for*

**Brian J. Johnson**  
Deputy Director, DTSC  
Sacramento, California

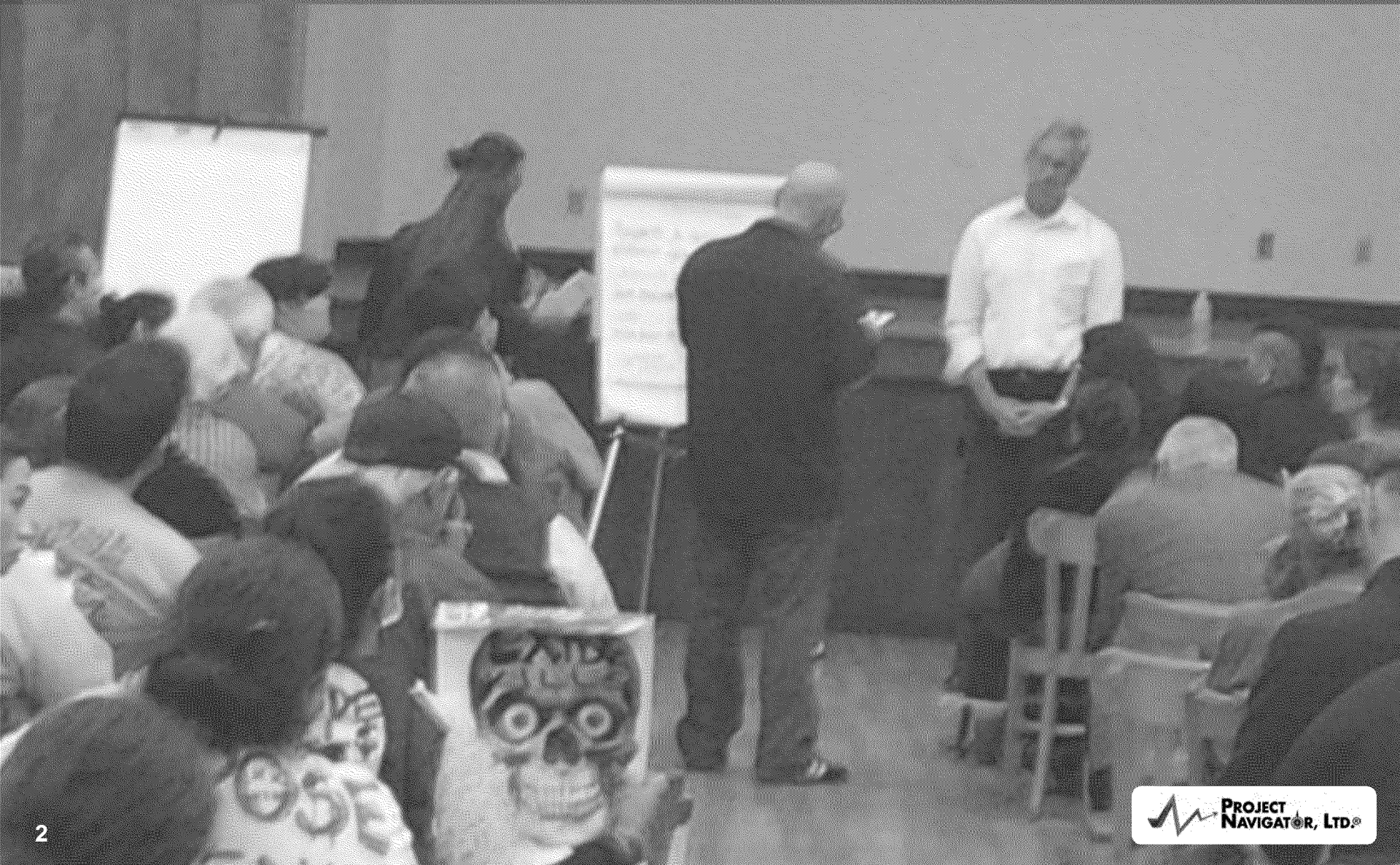
*Prepared by*

**Dr. Ian A. Webster**  
Project Navigator, Ltd.  
Brea, California



# Technical Communication Effectiveness was a Challenge at the March 19, 2014 Community Meeting

*Comunicación Técnica Eficacia era un Desafío en la Reunión de la Comunidad del 19 de marzo 2014*





“ Would the Presence, in the  
‘Project Business Space,’ of an  
**Independent Technical Expert\***,  
Reporting to Community Leaders,  
Help Advance the Situation? ”

*¿Seria la Presencia en el ‘Proyecto de Business Space’, de un  
**Independiente Experto Técnico**, Reportando a Líderes de la  
Comunidad, Ayuda Mejorar la Situación?*

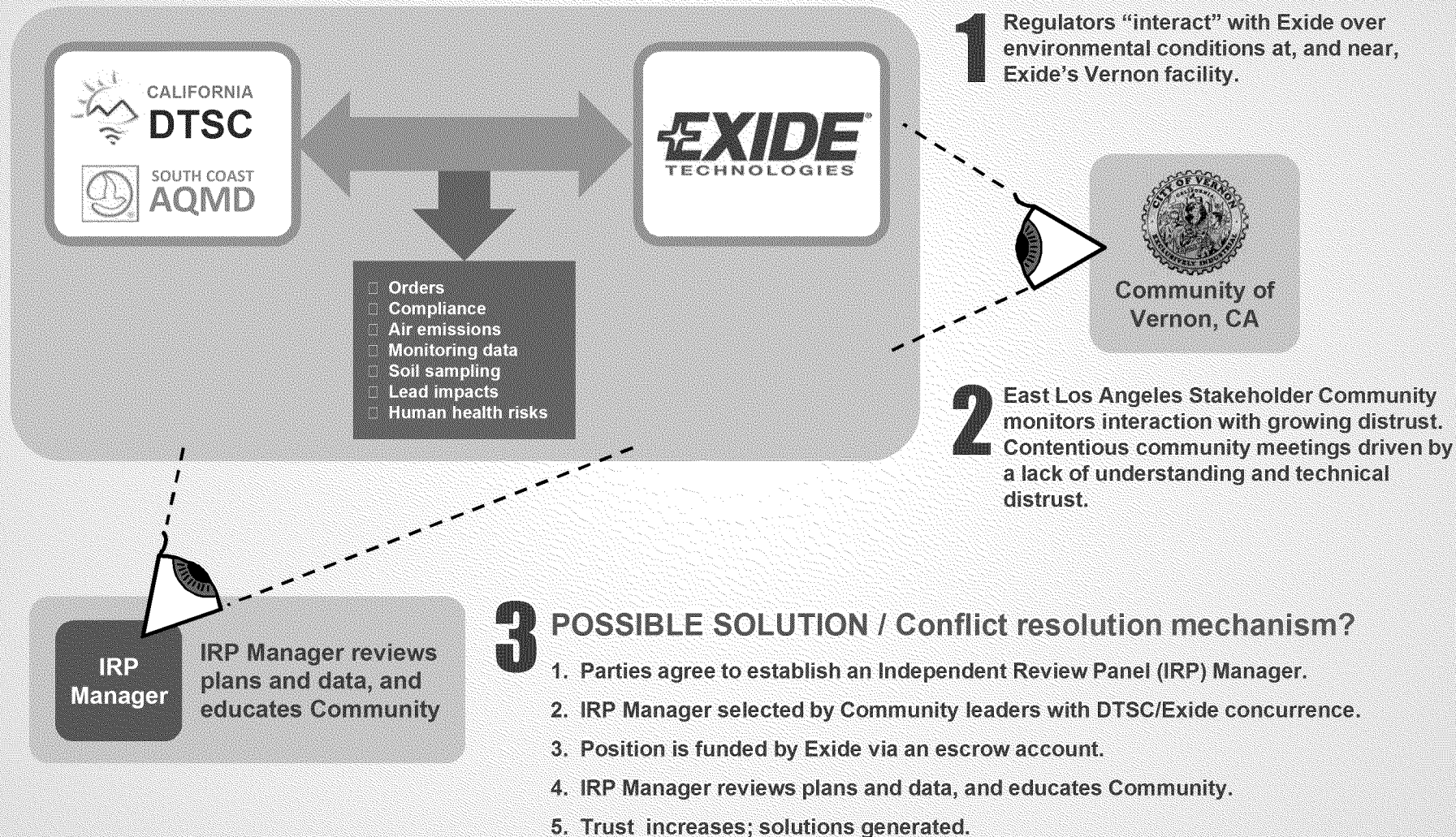
\* Called the Independent Review Panel (IRP) Manager at  
PG&E’s Hinkley Cr6 Groundwater Remediation Program

# CA Senate Bill 47 (SB 47) Allows for the Creation of a Community Technical Advisor

- “Assistance in establishing community advisory groups in communities where a cleanup is taking place if the local legislative body requests it, or a petition signed by 50 or more citizens is received by DTSC or the regional water quality control board.”
- “Creation of community services offices by DTSC and the State Water Resources Control Board to assist community participation in cleanups and to provide direct technical and logistical support to community advisory groups that request it.”
- “Provides that responsible parties for state Superfund sites may, if they choose, fund technical assistance grants to community advisory groups that may be used to hire technical consultants to advise the community advisory groups on cleanup proposals and decisions.”



# How the IRP Manager Function Could Improve “Trust,” Leading to Problem-Solving within the Community regarding Exide



# The IRP Manager

- IRP = Independent Review Panel Manager
- Mission is unbiased technical input, based on the individual's experience and professional judgment
- Ordered by Water Board at Hinkley



# The IRP Manager Role:

## A Pathway to Improved Understanding and Trust

- **Selected by the Community via an open RFP process**
  - (PG&E assisted the Hinkley Community manage the RFP process and consultant interviews)
- **Position is funded by the responsible party**
- **Becomes a Technical Resource for the Community**
  - (IRP Mgr role was Ordered by the Water Board at Hinkley)
- **IRP Manager receives all project information and data for review from responsible party**
- **Organizes and runs Community meetings**
  - Discusses project topics
  - Presents data plots and interpretations
  - Sounding board for Community questions
  - Follows up complex responses via posts to a project website
  - Meets with Community leaders and gives independent technical perspective
  - Maintains an independent technical presence in the Community
  - Talks technically (on behalf of Community) at public hearings

# Case Study:

## Community Technical Advisor

- The Water Board ordered the creation of the Technical Advisor position for the contentious PG&E Cr-6 groundwater remediation project in Hinkley, CA
  - “The Discharger must develop a process to fund an independent consultant(s) that can advise the community on matters subject to regulation by the Water Board. The independent consultant(s) selected by the community must not be involved in any aspect of this site (consulting for PG&E or involved in any litigation) and be acceptable to PG&E and the Water Board.”\*
- Project Navigator, Ltd. currently performs as the Hinkley Community’s Technical Advisor

\* California Regional Water Control Board, Lahontan Region (Water Board). 2011. Amended Cleanup and Abatement Order No.R6V-2011-0005A1, WDID No.6B369107001. October 11.



# Community Outreach: Examining the Similarities between Vernon's Exide Facility Situation and PG&E's Hinkley Chromium-6 Challenge

## *The Role of an Independent Technical Advisor to Community Stakeholders*

| No. | Factor  | PG&E, Hinkley                          | Exide, Vernon        | Comments  |
|-----|---|--|----------------------|---|
| 1   | Importance of facility to corporation           | High                                   | High                 | Facilities are critical to company's operations.  |
| 2   | Community desire to close facility              | Was High                               | Presently High       |   |
| 3   | Community trust of:<br>• Company<br>• Regulator | • Much Improved<br>• Much Improved     | • Low to Zero<br>• ? | Technical Advisor's role is review technical information and educate community. Reduces public pressure on regulator. |
| 4   | Long-term problem                               | Yes                                    | Yes                  |   |
| 5   | Media attention                                 | Major movie<br>LA Times, etc.<br>NPR   | LA Times<br>NPR      | Corporate image tarnished.  |
| 6   | Linkage of environmental impacts to facility    | Yes, but plume definition continues    | Yet to be determined | A complex cause-and-effect, plus risk communication challenge for Exide.  |
| 7   | An active community                             | Yes                                    | Yes                  | PNL has held over 30 major community meetings at Hinkley.   |
| 8   | Enforcement                                     | RWQCB, many orders                     | ?                    | PNL reports on technical compliance at Hinkley.   |
| 9   | Community meetings format                       | Now managed by Project Navigator, Ltd. | DTSC-led             | PNL's leadership of community meetings has reduced tensions.  |
| 10  | Pathway to a solution                           | Now defined with remedy solution       | ?                    | PNL explained options and selection process at Hinkley.   |
| 11  | Quantified health risks                         | Never proven                           | ?                    | As technical advisor, PNL introduced toxicologists, etc., for assessments presentations.                              |
| 12  | Technical communication challenges              | High                                   | Seemingly high       | PNL made extensive use of compelling graphics, visuals and models.  |

# At Hinkley, PG&E has Worked Hard to Build Technical Trust and Recover from Negative Perceptions Generated by the Movie "Erin Brockovich... The IRP\* Manager Plays a Key Role

## Different Perspectives: Lore Vs Facts

Erin Brockovich Movie Clip (2000)

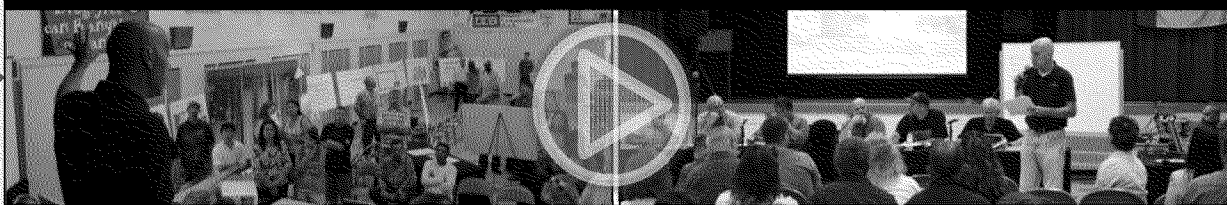


NIGHTLINE: Hinkley Interview with PG&E Senior Vice President, Des Bell (Dec, 2011)



VS

IRP Manager's work has helped "Bridge the Gap" between Community and Media perceptions and PG&E commitment to a solution



The IRP Manager independently helps the Community understand PG&E's technical activities, and build "trust." \*\*

\* IRP = Independent Review Program Manager.

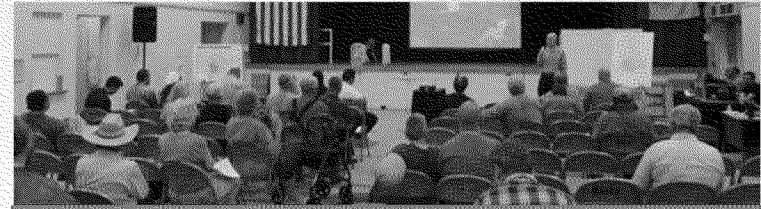
\*\* The IRP Manager was selected by the Hinkley Community via a Community Advisory Committee (CAC). IRP Manager's role is to provide independent technical interpretation and advise the Community. The IRP Manager is funded by PG&E via an escrow account, further validating the IRP Manager's autonomy.



# The IRP Manager Reviews, Comments and Communicates with the Community...Builds Trust

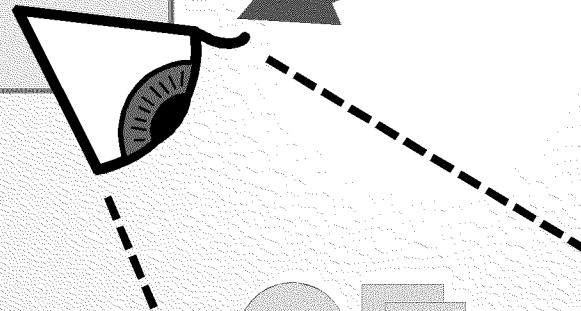
## IRP Manager

- Review and Interpretation
- Professional Judgment
- Relationships and Trust Development
- Visualization of Data
- Presentations
- Communications



## CAC and Hinkley Community

- 24 Monthly Community Meetings
- 3 Community Open Houses
- 90 Weekly CAC Meetings
- 35 Major Reports Reviewed
- Monthly Community Mailers
- 4 Community Workshops
- 120 days of office hours in Hinkley
- Hired experts:
  - EIR
  - Toxicologist
  - Facilitator
- 1000's of Questions Answered
- [www.HinkleyGroundwater.com](http://www.HinkleyGroundwater.com)



MB's of files, 1000's pp  
of information

Water Board review  
and comment



**PG&E's Hinkley  
Groundwater  
Remediation  
Team**



**Lahontan  
Water  
Board**

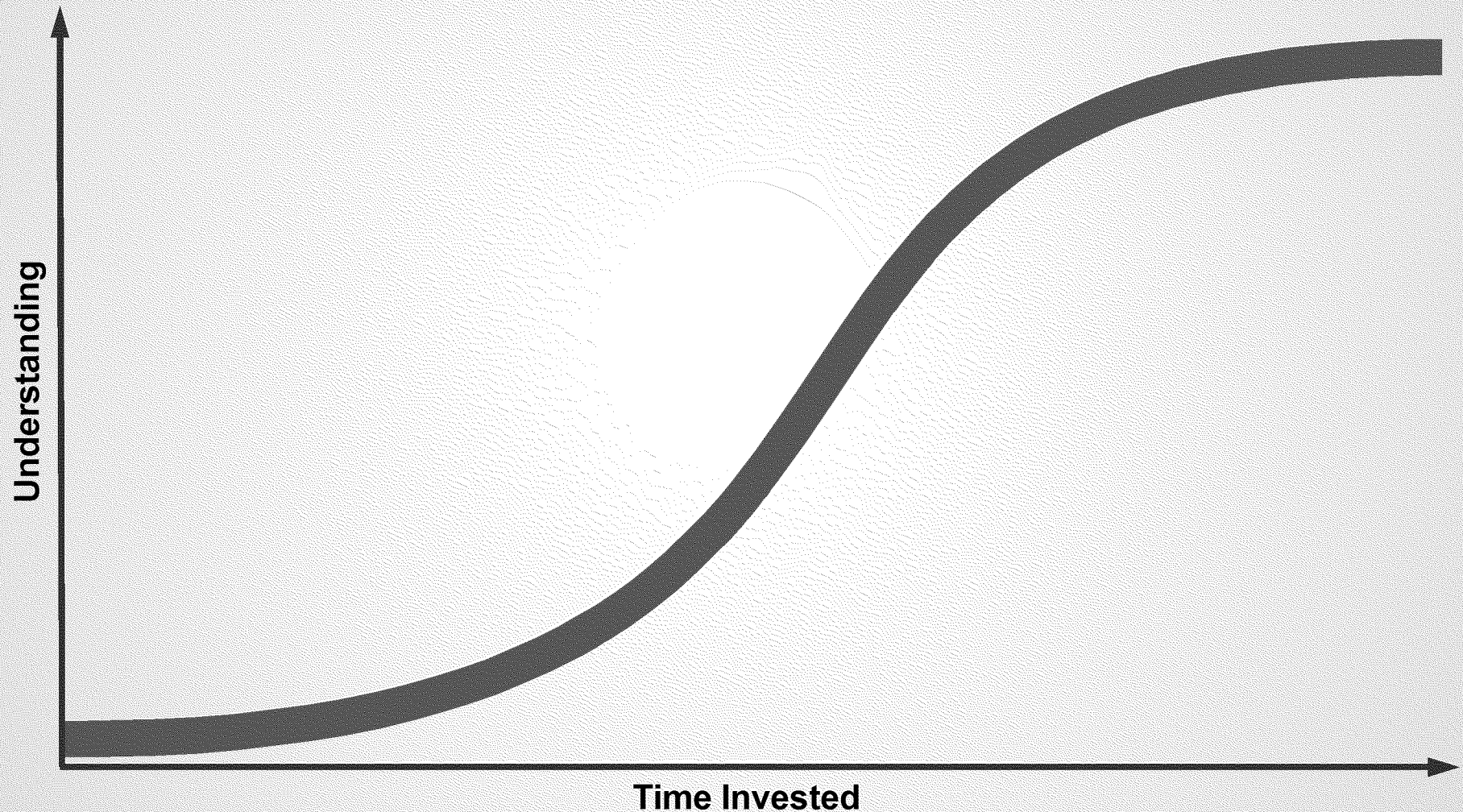
# Community Lore and Multiple Perceptions Can Cloud Rational Thinking and Decision-Making

## Where Does the IRP Manager Start?

## 10 Things the IRP Manager Can Do.



# 1. Establish a Culture that “We’re All on a Learning Curve”...Community, DTSC, SCAQMD & Exide.



## 2. Demonstrate “Data Transparency.”

IRP Manager receives  
all data from DTSC,  
Exide and SCAQMD



# 3. Start the Technical Education Process with Community Leaders...

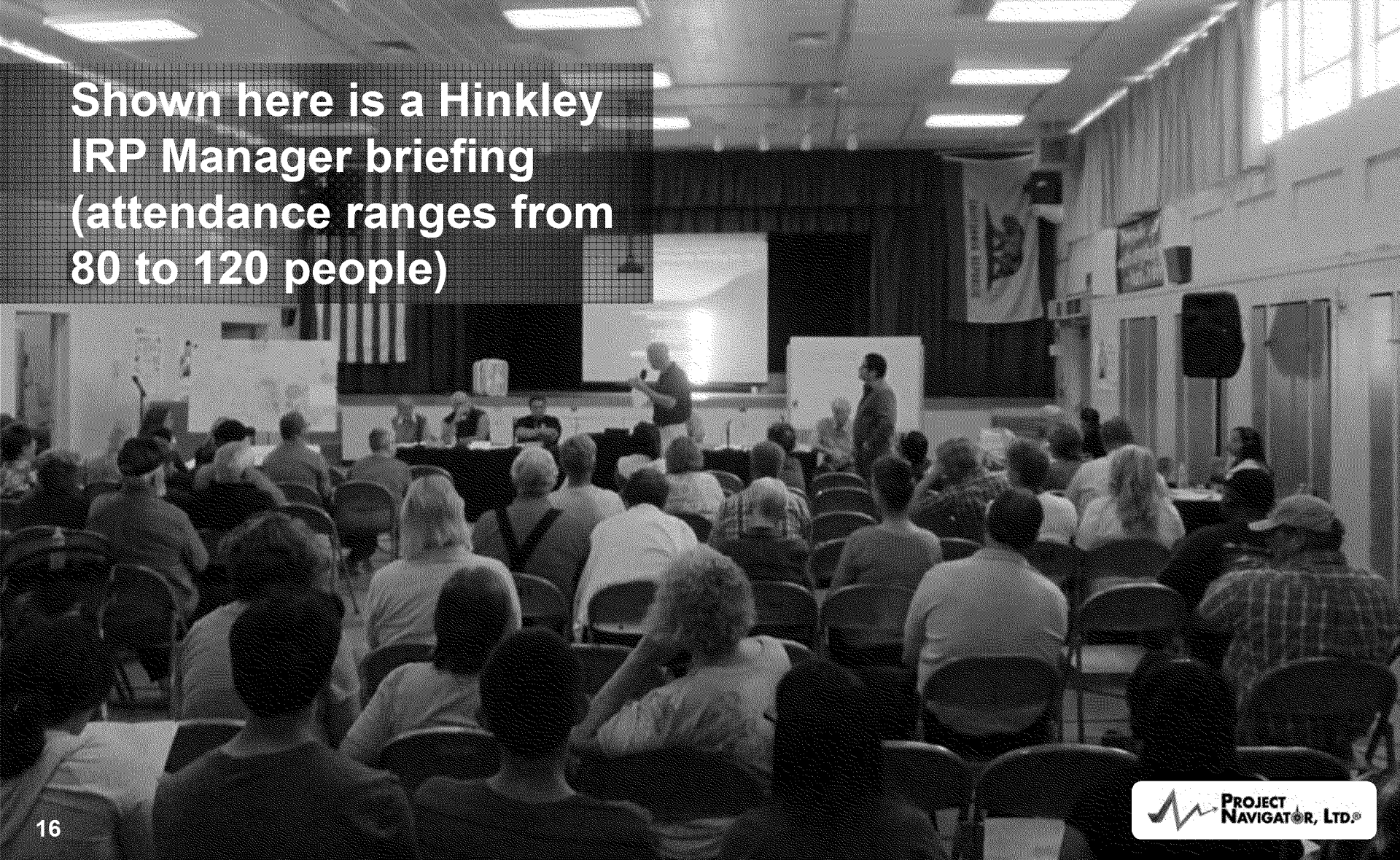
...A Simple Charter Establishes the Community Advisory Committee (CAC)





## 4. ... and Host (Monthly?) Technical Briefings at the Local School.

Shown here is a Hinkley  
IRP Manager briefing  
(attendance ranges from  
80 to 120 people)





# 5. Make Extensive Use of Visual Aids, for Extent of Impacts...





# 6. ...and Their Distribution within the Study Area.





# 7. Use Vivid GIS Imagery for Data Displays.





## 8. Host Community Open Houses, with Specific Technical Work Stations for Topic-Specific Education.





# 9. Summarize and Present Community Perceptions to Regulators.



# 10. Operate an Intuitively Useful Website.

*Shown here is [www.HinkleyGroundwater.com](http://www.HinkleyGroundwater.com).*

## Hinkley Groundwater Remediation Program

Community Advisory Committee Website

|      |       |                  |                 |             |                    |       |      |         |
|------|-------|------------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------------|-------|------|---------|
| HOME | ABOUT | SITE INFORMATION | PATH TO CR6 MCL | FACT SHEETS | COMMUNITY MEETINGS | MEDIA | BLOG | CONTACT |
|------|-------|------------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------------|-------|------|---------|

### Manganese Technical Exchange Meeting at Hinkley School, December 20, 2012



Project stakeholders are regularly meeting to better understand and take actions on specific technical issues.

The purpose of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) is for Hinkley residents and community leaders to advise, share concerns with, and provide direct input into the Hinkley Groundwater Remediation Program.

#### Updates

August 6, 2013

[IRP MANAGER TO HOST COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS FOR THE MONTH OF](#)

#### Current Programs

[PG&E Proposed Plan for Removal of Inactive Domestic Wells from the Domestic Well Sampling Plan](#)



# Take-Aways

- **“Trust” is Essential**
  - “PNL, your currency is Trust,” ~*Water Board Member re. Hinkley*
- **Slowly Replace “Lore” with “Facts”**
- **Build Relationships with Community Leaders**
- **Explain via the S-Curve; Bilingual Communication**
- **Define Tipping Point(s) from which to Advance**
- **“Station-Style” Community Meetings**
- **Use 3-D Hard Models**
- **Accept “10-Steps Forward / 9-Back” Slow Progress**

“Achieving progress is a long, slow, clunky, diplomatic slog.”

- Secretary of State John Kerry on an interview on CNN, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014





**Postscript: At the March 19, 2014 Community Meeting, There was a Poignant Moment when a Local School Appealed for Help in Building Planter Boxes for the School Children to Grow Vegetables.**

Ms. Karen Reyna of “The School of Tomorrow” referred to the negative perceptions of potentially lead-impacted local soils which the school children were planning to use in the planter boxes. DTSC committed to carrying a request for assistance to Exide.

Project Navigator, Ltd. has subsequently made a donation to the school to help fund the planter boxes.

## Lindave Institute

1712 Lyndon St • South Pasadena, CA 91030  
Phone: 626-826-3033 • E-Mail: [dave@lindave.org](mailto:dave@lindave.org)

Date: 4/29/14

Ian A. Webster, Sc.D  
One Pointe Drive  
Suite 320  
Brea, CA 92821

Dear Dr. Webster,

Your support is deeply appreciated and will be very useful in support of Lindave Institute, and our program to 'Grow a Clean Garden' with the Cristo Viene Christian School (CVC School).

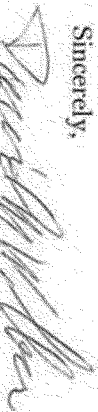
The planters will be given our projects: CVC School with children whose families are in a shelter for sober living, Baby College a free Mommy and Me program for new parents, Science Saturdays open free workshop for school age children in the community and Lectus program (similar to Rangers or Boy Scouts).

There are two reasons for supporting our **Grow A Clean Garden Project**. First the results from the recent testing for Lead in the ground in Boyle Heights (reference LA Times article on 3/12/14 about the Exide Battery facility in nearby Vernon) means that children should avoid direct contact with soil in the affected areas as much as possible. Hence creating a raised garden, with clean potting mix, will protect the children, both from direct contact with contaminated soil and from indirect exposure through contaminated fruits and vegetables grown in contaminated soil.

The second reason is to provide children with a fresh food resource from non-contaminated soil. Most of our children live in the nearby shelter and have limited fresh food resources. Our educational goal is to provide hands-on education experience of where food really comes from and to provide them with high quality, fresh fruits and vegetables.

This letter is to confirm your gift of \$2,485.00 to Lindave Institute.

Sincerely,



David M. Wilbur  
President

EIN: 46-2780086

*Thanks especially to  
Renee for hand delivering  
the letterpacket on Friday  
DMW*